

Contributions.

STRAY THOUGHTS.

W. H. MILLER.

Beginning work at Brighton, Ind., in November has caused events to shape themselves to meet the situation. The work is moving along well, considering the inclemency of the weather and local sickness.

On the 5th Brother Teeter began a series of meetings, and our prayer is that much good may be done. The church has undertaken to do what can be done for missions in a systematic way of giving, by adopting the plan of the State Mission Board. Suffice to say I am heartily in favor of missions, but believe our best effort should be spent at home so that we may gather momentum, and be ready so that when our church emerges from the crucible intact, rolling o'er all obstacles to spread truth and crush sin, Christ may be emblazoned on the hearts of men and his teaching ingrained into the very nature of humanity.

If the Spirit tells me to evangelize the black Negro I need not go to the Congo, but can do a ten-fold greater work without departing from America's shore, and hence be a forerunner on the King's high way. It was my privilege to hear Hon. Booker T. Washington lecture on the subject, "Solving the Negro problem in the black belt of the South." I believe that if all men were required to reach the plane to which he aspires to be able to help to place his fellow-men there would be a problem for the white man to solve. He would have the Negro to learn thrift and frugality. To aspire to a higher life. To develop intellectually. To learn his needs and wants. To be able to apply scientific principles to his daily work. To use modern inventions and methods in his work. In short to prepare himself that he may compete with the world in all avocations. Do any Caucasians need any of this? This thought was expressed: he who injures another is injured more himself. Think of this as it relates to politics, morals and religion, and note the result.

Could this not be likened to the fabled boomerang, which flies in a curved course, from the hand of him who hurls it and returning falls at his feet, or to the statement that a lie travels in a circle, and strikes him harder who says it than him against whom it is aimed? Then beware of injuring any one. Thus we may say there exist problems of various kinds, but one all must solve is this, "The problem of life."

I find myself here in school and strug-

gling to finish an eight year's course. The work is pleasant. It is uplifting. It is manna to the intellectually hungry. The air seems tainted with erudition as American air is with freedom. It can not but be uplifting to enjoy such privileges.

But, then as first impressions leave their mark and as a child never forgets its childhood surroundings, tho surrounded by all that wealth can provide in after years, so my heart longs that we might have a school as a church where I could finish my school work surrounded by students who held the same doctrines dear which are cherished by me and whose interest would be my interest in denominational church work. Are there other young men who cherish the same longings in their heart? Then what is needed to fill this vacuum?

Only this, that we should have a few good men who would dedicate themselves, their lives, their all, to this purpose that we, the Brethren Church need a school.

Hillsdale, Mich., Jan. 9.

SALVATION.—NO 2. DEPRAVITY.

S. W. WILT.

Reason as well as observation teach us the fact that human depravity exists, but does not and cannot shed a solitary ray of light on the manner of its introduction or its origin. All we have and know comes from God's book of revelation Gen. 3: 1 6. "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, yea, hath God said ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die, for God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat."

From this we learn that Satan made an instrument of the serpent, and through the serpent tempted our first parents to eat the forbidden fruit. Their loyalty and fidelity to their Creator was now put to the test; they yielded to the temptation, and in this way became transgressors of a law which they knew had been appointed of God, the author of their being,

and their benefactor to whom they should have looked for their council, and obeyed as their governor. This transgression was an act of their volitions, which might have been averted,—the law of God obeyed, and man continued in his state of holiness. Instead of continuing obedient they chose to be disobedient, and as a result lost their primitive holiness, and God inflicted on them the threatened penalty in accord to their transgression.

As it regards the exact nature of human depravity we will not enlarge upon it. However the writer does not; cannot fully endorse the general views entertained in regard to this branch of the subject. We are however forced to the admission that a disorder having a sinful tendency exists in the human system, otherwise no reason can be given for the universality of actual transgression, by all mankind.

Depravity is total so far as all the powers of our natures are concerned; that is the disorder before referred to affects and influences these powers. We sometimes hear it asserted that the strength of depravity is equally with all men. This idea may reasonably be doubted from the fact stated in the law, "that like begets like," as well as from general observation. The depravity or disorder that exists in our beings when we are born, and is previous to all voluntary action by us, is not charged to us as sin, or even guilt, that consigns any to endless perdition. The fact that we are born with a sinful propensity in our beings is no evidence that God will punish us because of the depravity entailed upon us by the transgression of our federalhead. From the fore-going considerations we deduce the following facts:

1. That we are born with a disorder in our beings, that has a tendency to lead us into sin.
2. We call this human depravity.
3. God does not, and will not punish us because it exists in our beings or persons.
4. That we are chargeable with sin, when we arrive at a period in our lives, and become able to know right from wrong, and good from evil and act from volition.
5. If we then sin, it is charged to us, and we are accounted guilty before God, and are personally, individually, responsible.

This brings us into a state that we have need to be saved from; hence, The Plan of Salvation, The theme for our next communication.

Toll Gate, W. Va.

The death of the wicked is lighted by no ray of hope.